

Historical Highlights Official Publication of The Sand Lake Historical Society.

Volume 49, Number 1

Our 49th Year

Summer 2022

From our new president

My first official act as SLHS President was to introduce the speakers for our June 14th program, a book talk by David Bushman and Mark Givens, co-authors of *Murder at Teal's Pond: Hazel Drew and the Mystery That Inspired Twin Peaks*, held at the Sand Lake Center for the Arts. Over 100 people came, including some Twin Peaks fans who came all the way from New Jersey to follow the "trail of Hazel's final days"! Who even knew that was a thing?

But the Hazel Drew story is more than just our local link to pop culture. It is a tale rooted in Sand Lake's history as a "vacation destination." In the late 1800s and early 1900s, we had regular trolley service from Troy, a half-dozen or so major hotels, an amusement park, cottages on the lakes – remnants of which still remain.

The Hazel Drew story is also about how much of Sand Lake's history is still out there, yet to be unearthed: just since 2017, we've had two books, a movie, and several presentations locally and around the region. Extra special credit goes to Sand Lake Town Historian Bob Moore and his many associates for supporting the writers, researchers and movie-makers in their work on this never-to-be-solved mystery (we hope!).

I also want to thank our new "class" of Officers and Trustees who have "stepped up" for the coming year: Vice President Holli Boyd-White; Treasurer Bud Whitney; Recording Secretary Beckie Klimak; Corresponding Secretary Ann Winnicki; and new Trustees Alisha Clark, Christina Codner, Eva Dacier, David Neubauer, and Beckie Klimak. Finally, heartfelt thank-yous to Past President Jackie Tremont and outgoing Trustees Sharon Dawes, and Nancy and Mike Perry. You will be missed (and, Jackie, I still have you on speed-dial!). – Peter Finn, President

Upcoming programs

- 1 September 13, Sand Lake Town Historian Bob Moore will update us on his recent activities.
- 1 October 11: Troy City and Rensselaer County Historian Kathy Sheehan will present Gilded Age Troy, including the filming of the HBO series. 7:00 p.m., Sand Lake Center for the Arts..
- November 15*: Indigenous consultant, historian, and member of the Oneida/Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation Heather Breugl will speak about Sand Lake's earliest inhabitants *NOTE the change from our "normal" second Tuesday meeting date to the third Tuesday for November ONLY.
- 1 December 13: Our members-only Holiday Celebration returns – barring more COVID bad news – to the Berti / Knowlson House on Schumann Road.

In this issue:

Mindful of our motto "Preserving the Past; Enriching the Future," your Society has taken on the task of preserving, restoring and enhancing several of the roadside historical markers in the Town of Sand Lake. More about that in this issue, along with a recap on our "Afternoon with artist Len Tantillo" gala and other recent events, news of an upcoming book project, and more...inside!

- January 10, 2023: *Sand Lake "Show and Tell"* returns expanded, with a new feature. In addition to bringing "what's in your attic" we'll be asking anyone who's been working on any locally based historical research (a popular at-home COVID pastime!) to share what they've discovered so far.
- 1 February 14: East Greenbush Town Historian Bobbie Reno will present a program on Edmonia Lewis.
- March 14: Phil Bernnard of the National Bottle Museum will discuss the Rensselaer Glassworks.
- April 11: to be determined.
- 1 May 9: Annual Meeting; details to be announced.
- June 13: to be determined.

Except as indicated above, our programs are held at 7:00 p.m., Sand Lake Town Hall Courtroom.

Recent programs

- 1 April 12: Sand Lake Show and Tell II. What's in your attic, cellar, closet, junk drawer? Old bottles and such from Sand Lake Springs, Village Shop gift boxes, glass slag from Glass Lake, photos, posters and/or ??? It's part of your history, but it's also part of Sand Lake's history!
- 1 May 10: Annual Meeting. Election of trustees and other business. Outgoing president Jacqueline Tremont looked back at the past year, with its challenges and successes. Bud Whitney and Andy Mace talked about efforts being made to refresh many of the roadside historical markers around town (more about that elsewhere in this issue). Andy also demonstrated various parts of our website, including the link to CatalogIt. Town Historian Bob Moore then demonstrated CatalogIt and its features and showed some of the many collections of both the Town and the Society that trustee Mike Perry has worked so diligently to photograph and catalog!
- 1 Sunday, May 22: An afternoon with artist Len Tantillo fundraiser and gala. Our thanks to everyone who attended and to Kevin and Janice Tighe and the staff at Tighe's Bistro Américain. Thanks also to Sponsors Len Tantillo (who also gave a fascinating presentation in addition to donating a print for the silent auction), Alice and Harold Howard, Robert Moore and Christina Malone, Laura White-Rivers, June Foltz; Donors Jackie Tremont, Mike and Nancy Perry, Sharon Dawes, Holli and Drew White, Bruce Mareness and Dawn Vink, Scott and Claudia Bendett, Jeanne Stewart, Mary LaFleur, Andrew Mace; Businesses SS&P Wine and Liquor Warehouse, Arlington House, Crossroads American Grille, Towne Tavern, Tremont Ace Hardware, Young's Pharmacy and General Store, Lakeview on Crystal Lake, Old Daley on Crooked Lake; and the many Sand Lake Historical Society members who helped organize and set up!



June 14: Murder at Teal's Pond: Hazel Drew and the Mystery That Inspired Twin Peaks; presentation, discussion and book signing by authors David Bushman and Mark Givens. A sell-out crowd at Sand Lake Center for the Arts!

SLHS online

If you haven't already done so, find us on Facebook: facebook.com/SandLakeHistoricalSociety! It's a great place to get the most up-to-date news on meetings and events, along with other items of interest from us and from other places and groups in the Capital District. And you might see things you won't see in our newsletter or on the website!

Our page is getting noticed more and more! In December 2019, we hit a milestone: 500 likes! In July 2022, we hit another milestone with our 1,000th like; congratulations to Janet Malecki, who receives a complimentary one-year membership. As of August 1, we are up to 1.012 *likes* (and almost 1,100 *followers*)!

Sand Lake (NY) History is a companion *group* to our Sand Lake Historical Society *page*. This group allows members to share information and to ask or answer questions about our Town's history. This, too, is quite popular, currently with over 1,100 members!

And there's always our website, <u>sandlakehistory.org/!</u> Recent additions include a section on restoration of a number of roadside historical markers in town (*also* a feature article elsewhere in this issue).

Dues & membership cards

If your label notes "2022" (or if a similar notation is part of the email in which you receive this newsletter), your dues are due! Updated membership cards will go out in conjunction with the Fall issue.

SLHS member notification list

Those of you who have shared your email address with us should be familiar with our list called "slhsmembers@googlegroups.com" This is an announce-only list to quickly get word to members regarding cancellations, postponements and/or program reminders; it is not a discussion list. Postings generally run about 1-2 per month, and you will be offered the opportunity to opt out. We would love to add members whose email address was not on file; just let us know, as it is our best way to get important news out quickly! This will supplement any notifications on the School Closing Network (local TV stations and newspaper websites) or on our Facebook page and website.

SLHS / APHS memorial awards

Each year, the Society presents two memorial awards to graduating Averill Park High School seniors who have demonstrated a deep interest in history. In 2022, awards in memory of deceased members Al Hayner, Helen Howe and James Smyth were given to *Tristen Alderman* and *Lillian Vraslovic*.

Caring for our roadside markers Augmenting the markers

Many of our roadside historical markers in the Town of Sand Lake now display the new QR code

badge. Scanning that badge will lead you to more information about these and other markers on our website, as well as an interactive map showing the location of all 12 markers. The QR code links to:



https://sandlakehistory.org/historical-markers/

This is one of two concurrent marker-related projects being undertaken by members of the Sand Lake Historical Society, the other being refurbishing older, weathered markers.

Preserving / restoring the markers



A visual survey of our markers this past winter determined that 7 of the 12 markers needed serious attention!

Above is the marker at the former Trinity Lutheran Church in West Sand Lake, the oldest (1938) marker in Town -- the only one in cast iron and the only "original" State Education Department marker. This marker, being cast iron, had significant rust and needed sandblasting. Here you can see the rust in the Trinity marker.

The other markers in Town, including the one for Sand Lake Union Cemetery, are cast aluminum and are much newer, none being over 20 years old. Cast aluminum doesn't "rust" as cast iron will, but it can corrode in other ways. A closeup of one side of the Sand Lake Union Cemetery sign revealed significant deterioration of some of the lettering. This is likely due to the effects of decades of weather, road salt and such on the casting. The other side of the marker was in much better condition but exhibited what might

have been a repair at the time of its casting; traces of plastic filler were also found when the sign was stripped of paint!

Thankfully, markers for Glass Lake, Sand Lake Baptist Church, Log Church, Bernhard Uhlein and Burden Lake were in better physical condition, with only chipping and other paint loss.

The Sand Lake Historical Society decided to undertake refurbishment of these seven markers. On 4/18/2022, Brian Hunt from the Town Highway Department assisted SLHS members Mike Perry, Andy Mace and Bud Whitney (now collectively known as the *Marker Maniacs!*) in removing one very heavy cast-iron marker from the pole. It was transported to **ASC Powder Coating in Rensselaer** for blasting to clean off the old paint and rust. ASC generously

donated not only the blasting, but also powdercoating in the base blue! (NOTE: the older State Ed. Dept. markers appear to have originally been



painted in a darker blue than the "Royal" blue used on current markers. Intentionally or not, ASC's choice of that very dark blue for the powder coating seemed appropriate!)

The partially stripped Sand Lake Union Cemetery marker was displayed at Sky High Community Center on Sand Lake Cleanup Day, 5/7/2022, where a fortuitous encounter with **Sage Bros. Painting in**



Troy ultimately resulted in the Society contracting with them to refinish this and the other five "needy" cast aluminum markers.

Those six markers were collected and transported to Sage Bros. in late June 2022, and the refinished markers were retrieved on July 21! On Friday, July 22, the Burden Lake marker was reunited with its pole. The image above shows the "before" and "after"; quite an improvement! The Sand Lake Union Cemetery marker was installed several days later (see the "before" and "after" on the next page). The others will be reinstalled and QR code plaques added in the coming weeks!



If there is a lesson to be learned, it is simply that nothing lasts forever, but simple care can help preserve these markers! The marker at the site of the District No. 1 school house on Sheer Road (marker erected in 2014) was in good condition, but it was beginning to look a bit faded. Thankfully, a simple cleaning and application of an automotive cleaner/wax has made it look almost as new. Some *very minor* paint touchup will be performed soon, and that marker should look fine for years to come.

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation, which provides grant funds for roadside markers such as the Fox Mansion marker erected in 2021, promotes an annual National Historic Marker Day in April, to "[encourage] individuals and groups of all sizes to help maintain their community's historic markers and celebrate local history" by simply washing/cleaning markers in their communities. Like our cars, the markers look better without all that accumulated dirt and grime, and they might last longer, too!

Again, the Sand Lake Historical Society wishes to thank ASC Powder Coating and Sage Bros.

Painting for their work physically restoring the markers; and Joel Uline (8th great-grandson of Bernhard Uhlein), Glass Lake Neighborhood Group, the Burden Lake Association, and the Office of the Sand Lake Town Historian for financial support of this project. We would also like to thank Pat Lane, Wayne Gendron and the Kiwanis Club of Sand Lake for inviting the Marker Maniacs to make a well-received presentation at the July 25 Kiwanis meeting!

So much more information on these projects is available at https://sandlakehistory.org/historical-markers/! Better still, take a ride around the town and view the marker sites in person!

A final observation on our roadside historical markers. You might wonder as you read the Trinity Lutheran Church marker. As it happened, the marker turned out to be "accurate" for only six years; in 1944, a lightning strike and resulting fire destroyed that 1816 edifice. It was replaced by the current structure in 1953. Several years ago, that congregation merged with another Lutheran church in North Greenbush, and the brick church is now occupied by the West Sand Lake Community Church (formerly Lake Avenue Community Church). So, even the markers themselves can have a "history"!

Supporting SLHS Bloomin' 4 Good @ Hannaford

Supporters helped SLHS raise \$38 in March 2022 at the **West Sand Lake Hannaford**. Thanks to those supporters and to Hannaford for their continuing support of local organizations!

Other ways to support SLHS

Now, you can bring your deposit bottles and cans to the **6 Center Redemption Center** at 461 Main Street in Wynantskill and tell the staff that they are for SLHS! **6 Center** is open Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m., and Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

We also are now eligible for contributions from the **Amazon Smile** program; just select *Sand Lake Historical Society* when you purchase through Amazon Smile!

Sand Lake pandemic project

We all can't wait for the COVID-19 pandemic to become history – and a new group of Sand Lakers is already working on making that happen!

Under the sponsorship of the Sand Lake Historical Society and co-chaired by SLHS members Kathy Jimino and Jacqueline Tremont, a volunteer committee has come together to develop the "Sand Lake Pandemic Project," a history of Sand Lake during the pandemic. Highlighted will be experiences of health care workers, teachers, first responders, businesses, front-line workers, and others as they navigated the pandemic. This history of Sand Lake during the pandemic will be turned into a book, to be available in 2023.

The committee has just begun its work and will be developing guidelines, soliciting stories, screening submissions, editing – and fundraising – over the next several months. This is a wonderful project that the SLHS is happy to support.

Stayed tuned for more details.

Officers and Trustees 2022-2023

Officers: Peter Finn (2025), President; Holli Boyd-White (2024), Vice President; Rebecca Hoffay Klimek (2022), Recording Secretary; Ann Winnicki (2025), Corresponding Secretary; Wayland Whitney (2023), Treasurer.

Trustees: Alicia Clark (2025), Christina Codner (2023), Eva Juliette Dacier (2025), Linda J. Henchey (2024), Doug Kelley (2024), Rebecca Hoffay Klimek (2025), David Neubauer (2025), David Post (2024), Jim Powers (2023), Michelle Mosher Schultz (2023). Currently, there is one vacancy.

News notes

...that you missed, either because they happened a long time ago and before you were born, or because you don't spend all your spare time poring over newspaper microfilm or websites like Fultonhistory.com or Newspapers.com like some of us do!

NOTICE—Mrs. Sally Thompson will deliver a discourse in defence of Female Preaching on the second Sabbath in June next, at 2 o'clock P. M., at the Presbyterian Church at Sandlake Corners. Sandlake, May 22, 1837.

Notice – Mrs. Sally Thompson will deliver a discourse in defence of Female Preaching on the second Sabbath in June next, at 2 o'clock P.M., at the Presbyterian Church at Sandlake Corners. Sand Lake, May 22, 1837 – from the Troy Daily Whig, May 22, 1837

—H. A. Cook, a justice of the peace in Sand lake, has been developing powers which it would puzzle Blackstone to explain. Some time since, it is alleged, he issued a bill of divorcement and personally divided the property of the contestants; charged the town 50 cents for settling a dispute between a Dutch shoemaker and wife; appointed two postmasters for the town of Averill before any post-office had been established there; and built in his mind several narrow guage railroads from Sandlake to Troy and Albany. By far

his greatest effort however is this notice which he posted up in the village post-office lately.

Whereas, the desecration of the Sabbath by drunken nights, swearing and yelling is becoming so common In Sandlake as that this village has nearly become the devil's den on that day, while adjacent towns are pointing the finger of scoff at us; therefore,

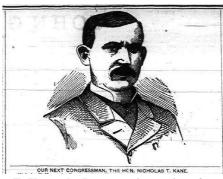
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office lately. Whereas, the desperation of the Sabbath by drunken labels, swearing and yelling is becoming to common in Sandiake as that this village has nearly broune the devil's den on that day, while adjacent towns are pointing the finger of scoff at us; therefore, the undersigned, justice of the peace, in obeyance to his oath of office and the numerous compaints made to him by many cirizens, has dependented at all lazars to escents the retained to the very letter in the retained of the people of the state of New York, command the following persons as "pose committed." Virging 1996. G. Phyric, Frank fettet, Alfred Horton, Bydney Taylor, French Griggs, Willard Griggs, Edward Haed, James Nash, James Whash, James Mash, James Ma

the undersigned, justice of the peace, In obeyance to his oath of office and the numerous complaints made to him by many citizens, has determined at all hazards to execute the statute law to the very letter in regard to the aforesaid desecration. I hereby, in the name of the people of the state of New York, command the following persons as,"poss committus," viz: Jas. G. Payne, Frank Pettet, Alfred Horton, Sydney Taylor, Pierce Kane, Alfred Carman, David Taylor, John Taylor, Friend Griggs, Willard Griggs, Edward Hatch, James Nash, James Wheatcraft, to be ready in their hidden places every Sunday afternoon, 8 P. M., fully prepared to defend their persons and assist the officers of the law in making any arrests. Any refusal to act will be lawfully dealt with by H. A. COOK, Justice.

-- from the Utica Morning Herald, July 16, 1880

OUR NEXT CONGRESSMAN, THE HON. NICHOLAS T. KANE



Nicholas T. Kane, the Democratic nominee for congress, whose portrait is given above, is forty years of age. He is of Irish parentage and Was brought up in West Troy, where he has lived since he was two years old. When but seventeen he enlisted at West Troy in the Twentieth New York cavalry, under Capt. Bridgford, and after about three years was honorably discharged, having served in many important battles in and about Richmond. During his first year his brother, who had enlisted with him, was killed at Fort Sumter while bravely leading a charge, and his memory was perpetuated by his fellow-soldiers of West Troy by naming Post K., G. A. R., in his honor. After being mustered out Mr. Kane commenced civil life at the bottom of the ladder and labored industriously as a spinner at th Kenwood mills, on the outskirts of the city of Albany. After this at Stillwater, with his brother, Pierce Kane, and later on in Rhode Island, Greenwich and Hudson, N. Y., he still further extended his experience in mill management and carefully husbanded his earnings. He also worked in the Carson mills at Cohoes. The Kane brothers, with their large experience and a small capital, then determined upon breaking the ice for themselves, and hired some abandoned mills at Sandlake, Rensselaer county, N. Y., about 1878, and ran them under the direct superintendence of the present candidate. His business ability and well-known integrity brought many friends and gathered success. The debts which the new venture started with soon disappeared, and "the Interlaken mills" to-day employ 150 hands, among whom, during the entire term of Mr. Kane's ownership, nothing but the most cordial feelings have been entertained for their employer. Mr. Kane is largely interested in other successful commercial ventures. He has represented the town of Watervliet, of which he continues a resident, for three years in the board of supervisors, the last time as chairman of the board. Mr. Kane is married. His parents, who died two years ago, lived to enjoy their son's honor and prosperity, continuing to reside with him to the last. He is known as a man of great energy and tenacity of purpose, and what measures he actively supports will possess excellent chances of success. The people of Watervliet recognize in Mr. Kane an indomitable champion in local legislation, and his well-known support of all measures in favor of the establishment of a government gun foundry at Watervliet, will be a source of additional strength to his canvass. With his popularity, push and political sagacity, there can be no doubt of the result of his candidacy. - from the [Albany] Argus, October 26, 1886

[Kane was elected to the 50th United States Congress and served from March 4, 1887, until his death from tuberculosis in Albany on September 14, 1887, before the Congressional session started. – Ed.] Smooth Concrete Roads Take Motorist Through 3 States On 125-Mile Run from Albany...

By THE TOURIST

There's a long, long trail of concrete winding Into the very heart of the Berkshire mountain range within short motoring distance from Albany. Roads from which the tourist turned away last season because of bumps and what-not have been changed as by the magic of an Aladdin's lamp so that now they are inviting stretches of highway, wending an endless route through the most beautiful sections of three states.

For the first Albany Area motorlogue of the season, the Tourist ventures to suggest a run of 125 miles today, starting from Albany. Because the Pittsfield road is under construction between East Schodack and Brainard, the motorist should take care to follow the advice of the Tourist viz:

Proceed across the Hudson bridge to Rensselaer, than continue straight ahead over the Third avenue viaduct on up the hill to the Troy connecting road, make a left turn, continue to the Defreestville corners, than turn right on the concrete and follow the road through West Sand Lake to Averill park, where another right turn will bring the motorist onto a recently finished ribbon of concrete that runs for about 20 miles through the famous Rensselaer county lake country out to West Lebanon. There the road joins with the regular Albany-Pittsfield road beyond the construction area. Take a left turn and follow Route 20 up over Lebanon mountain into Pittsfield.

PICTURESQUE VILLAGE.

Without losing your sense of precaution, take time to admire the quaintness of the little village of West Sand Lake (note the white steeple of the church) as you roll down the winding hill. And after leaving Averill Park don't step on it so much that you miss the grandeur of Glass Lake, Sand Lake and Crooked Lake, each distinctive and quite appropriate to their names. The fisherman's heart will thump with delight at the sight of Pike's Pond off to the left of the road just beyond Denault's corners... -- from the Times-Union, April 27, 1930

[Notes: The "Hudson bridge" referenced was the predecessor to the original Dunn Memorial Bridge. The "Troy connecting road" is todays Route 4, and the "right on the concrete" puts you on today's Route 43 and then onto Route 66 in Averill Park. – Ed.]

Federal Agency To Spell It, "Sand Lake"

The Rensselaer County Highway Department scored a victory as the U. S. Division of Geography announced



yesterday in Washington, D. C., that the hamlets of Sand Lake and West Sand Lake will retain the present spelling.

As part of the program to simplify names of places, the division had ruled some time ago that the communities be spelled Sandlake and West Sandlake.

The County Highway Department continually has spelled the names on its official maps as separate words, turning a deaf ear to the map makers in Washington.

The Division of Geography now has announced that its Board on Geographical Names has decided to go along with the officials of the county.

Mrs. Raymond S. Miller, speaking for her husband, who is the supervisor of the town of Sand Lake, said last night that the town board had not been asked for its opinion, but since

no change is being made, the constituents will raise no objections.

The federal agency also ruled that the half-mile body of water will be called Crystal Lake, although at one time the federal maps listed it as Sand Lake. If no legitimate objections to the decisions are received within thirty days, the division will make the rulings official.

The hamlets or unincorporated villages of Sand Lake and West Sand Lake are in the town of Sand Lake, which was formed in 1812 from the parts of the towns of Greenbush and Berlin. – from the [Troy] Times Record, July 17, 1947

In Memoriam

- 1 Long-time member Clara Leavenworth Radz, passed away on April 22, 2022. Clare was raised in Averill Park and was a 1948 graduate of the Averill Park High School. Clare and husband Donald were interested in Genealogy and spent a great amount of time cataloging the cemeteries of Rensselaer County.
- 1 Member *Edna Ryan Wells* died on June 26, 2022. A descendent of the Averill family, Edna's daughters most recently attended our 2022 Gala and, before that, attended the dedication of the Fox Mansion marker. She will be buried in the family plot at Sand Lake Union Cemetery.
- We also remember *Tom Cipperley*, who died July 23, 2022. Tom wasn't a current member of SLHS (although his wife, the late Mary Margaret "Meg" Cipperley, was very active in the Society in years past), but he was truly an icon in West Sand Lake ever present, ever friendly, and ever willing to lend a hand. He was an Honorary Member of the West Sand Lake Volunteer Fire Department, a former president of the Elmwood Cemetery, and he served for over 25 years on the Averill Park School Board.
- Shirley Wiltse Dunn, died April 25, 2022. Holder of master' degrees in English and History, Shirley worked as a teacher, museum interpreter, editor and historic preservationist. She was a founding member of the Esquatak Historical Society in Schodack and East Greenbush. She also was a founder and first president of the Dutch Barn Preservation Society. Her various interests led to writing or editing seven books, including three histories related to the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation, one on Dutch Architecture near Albany (with co-author Allison Bennett), a children's book on the Mohicans, and a popular book of her mother's stories of places and events in the Tannersville area of the Catskill Mountains titled Pioneer Days in the Catskill High Peaks. Her last book, on Fort Crailo and the Van Rensselaer families who lived there, was published in 2016.



Sand Lake Historical Society Membership Application/Renewal 2022-2023

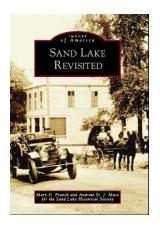
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Please make checks payable to *Sand Lake Historical Society*. Mail to: Sand Lake Historical Society, Post Office Box 492, West Sand Lake, New York 12196

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NOTE: Memberships run from June 1 through May 31. New memberships will be good through 5/31/2023!



https://sandlakehistory.org E-mail: sandlakehistory@aol.com Historical Highlights 49:1 Andrew Mace, Editor/Publisher





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